

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
5th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties
Kushiro, Japan
9-16 June 1993

Recommendation 5.1.3: Lower Danube Basin

NOTING that the River Danube runs through eight states, and includes or is associated with several wetlands of international importance in their own right, including the Ramsar sites of Cicov oxbow lake and Danubian flood plains in the Slovak Republic, Lake Srebarna in Bulgaria and Danube Delta in Romania;

RECALLING that Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention undertake to consult with each other about implementing obligations arising from the Convention, especially in the case of a wetland extending over the territories of more than one Contracting Party, or where a water system is shared;

NOTING the conclusions of the workshop convened under the auspices of the Ramsar and Berne Conventions on Mediterranean type wetlands, and in particular emphasizing the importance of “whole basin” management for the conservation and wise use of such wetlands;

RECALLING that the Donau-March-Auen Ramsar site in Austria was included in the Montreux Record at the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 1990;

FURTHER RECALLING that the Monitoring Procedure has been operated at the Donau-March-Auen Ramsar site in Austria and the Srebarna Ramsar site in Bulgaria;

TAKING NOTE of the contribution by the Austrian delegation in Workshop A on the application of the Monitoring Procedure to Donau-March-Auen;

CONCERNED at the threats to the ecological character of the Danube and various of its associated wetlands from routine pollution, the diversion of the river flow for the Gabčíkovo hydroelectric dam in Slovakia, and the risk of deliberate or accidental release of oil by vessels;

CONVINCED that protection, management and administration of the Danube and its associated wetlands require a cooperative international “whole basin” approach, such as that envisaged by the agreement reached by the meeting of Danubian states in 1991 to develop a Danube Basin Ecological Convention;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

CALLS ON the Governments of Slovakia and Hungary to accept as binding the ruling of the International Court of Justice on the Gabčíkovo dam issue, and in any case to work with the international community towards a satisfactory resolution of ecological concerns;

CALLS ON the governments of the riparian states of the Danube to come to an agreement designed to safeguard the best wildlife sites along the Lower Danube within their territories;

RECOMMENDS that the European Economic Community and development assistance agencies provide the financial support requested for the development of an emergency pollution contingency response capability for the Danube in Romania and Bulgaria;

REQUESTS the Convention Bureau to encourage and maintain contact with those developing proposals for a Danube Basin Ecological Convention, with a view to such a Convention, if concluded, taking account of and complementing the Ramsar Convention;

RECOMMENDS that the governments of the riparian states of the Danube consider the need for mandating a Danube Basin Commission or other appropriate body to address the urgent task of establishing a plan for the wise use of the river, including the conservation of its rich wildlife resources and the restoration of natural flood plain features upstream of the delta;

RECOMMENDS that the Government of Romania, as an urgent follow-up to its commitments through accession to the Ramsar, World Heritage and Berne Conventions, create the legal framework to secure the aims and governance of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve for the wise use of this Ramsar site; and

REQUESTS that the Government of Ukraine initiate official and close cooperation with the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve authorities to ensure in the shortest time possible the application of wise management for the complete Danube Delta wetland system.